

COMMUNITY LED HOUSING



June 2020



WELCOME TO THE HOMES OF OUR OWN NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the second edition of the Homes of Our Own newsletter. In this edition we'll bring you news, information and updates on Homes of Our Own and Community Led Housing.

We understand that the last couple of months will have been challenging for community led housing groups and for the sector.

Since the lockdown the Homes of Our Own team have been continuing to work from home, providing support to existing and emerging community led housing groups, as well as looking at ways in which we, and groups can continue to effectively work remotely.

We have been working hard to produce resources for groups to utilise which are available to download from our new website [here](#).

Homes of Our Own are part of a wider national network of community-led housing hubs which are supported by Community Led Homes.

Hubs across the country are continuing their work and Community Led Homes have been hosting useful weekly catch ups on Zoom.

The catch ups have been providing the hubs with an opportunity to learn from each other and to discuss effective ways of working in the current circumstances.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING

Neighbourhood planning is a way for communities to decide the future of the places where they live and work. The government has introduced the community right to do neighbourhood planning through the [Localism Act](#).

Regulations linked to the Coronavirus Act 2020 mean that no elections or referendums can take place until 6 May 2021, this includes neighbourhood planning referendums. However, Wiltshire Council will continue to support neighbourhood planning and decision making on applications.

[Locality](#) (who manage the support process for neighbourhood planning, on behalf of the government) provide advice on their website to enable neighbourhood planning community groups to continue preparing their plans while respecting social distancing requirements.

If Neighbourhood Plan Steering Groups require further information they can contact their Neighbourhood Plan Link Officer by phone or email. You can also find out more about Neighbourhood Planning in Wiltshire [here](#).

TEAM TRAINING

Enabling hubs, like Homes of Our Own, have access to a training programme that enables Community Led Housing Advisors to become accredited.

The unique training and accreditation programme was created by partners of Community Led Homes and took six days to complete, followed by coursework for each of the four modules.

We're pleased to announce that in March 2020 Louise Newman, Project Manager for Homes of Our Own successfully completed the training programme and is now a recognised Community Led Housing Accredited Adviser.



Community Led Homes
Accredited Adviser

A NOTE FROM WILTSHIRE COMMUNITY LAND TRUST



As Chair of the Wiltshire Community Land Trust (WCLT) I send my heartfelt support to everybody involved and interested in community-led housing in Wiltshire and Swindon.

Despite the massive threat of the coronavirus pandemic, which has locked us all down to various degrees, I am very pleased to say that the *Homes of our Own* partnership, of which WCLT is a 'founder member', is continuing to offer support and advice to all communities in our area by whatever means are effective.

I pay great tribute to the staff team members who have been very busy strengthening communications throughout the lockdown and keeping the show on the road.

This week the partnership's Steering Group, and the WCLT Board, have both successfully met via *Microsoft Teams* to progress business.

We will be shortly updating the WCLT website to link in with the *Homes of our Own* hub.

One of the leading projects that the pandemic so rudely interrupted is the proposal for ten affordable homes prepared by Seend Community Land and Asset Trust. I am delighted to say that this excellent scheme has now been submitted for planning approval.

The Seend CLA Trust has worked diligently to put together this proposal in close consultation with the local community in order to help meet local housing needs on a suitable site on the edge of the village. Great care has been taken to ensure that access and design are matched to local conditions and meet a very high standard of sustainable energy provision.

This is an excellent and much needed scheme, and we very much hope that planning permission will be successfully granted.

One of the outstanding features of this pandemic crisis has been the voluntary and spontaneous response of local communities to offer and deliver help and support in whatever ways they can.

I think there are profound lessons here for the ways in which we can and should face up to social issues in the future, and even more crucially deliver solutions. Community-led housing is a prime example of such an approach; and I hope very much that the experience of local communities coping with the current emergency will strengthen their resolve and willingness to take on the urgent task of providing affordable homes for local people in the future.

Be assured that we are all here to help you in whatever ways are needed.

*Trevor Cherrett, Chair,
Wiltshire Community Land Trust*



Volunteers don't get paid, not because they're worthless, but because they're priceless...

TIME TO SAY THANKS

The Clap for our Carers tribute on Thursday evenings has seen us embrace a new way to applaud our un-sung heroes – In many cases, some of us have found we are seeing neighbours in our community for the first time.

There is no doubt that during this challenging time, people have been stepping up to help in ways we have not seen before.

Staying safe when supporting others, due to physical distancing has been an additional challenge.

We would love to hear your stories on what you have been up to during this time.

Volunteers are heroes who wear invisible capes too...

So, please share with us your stories and, if possible, photos too, so we can see how you have been supporting the community within which you live. We look forward to sharing what you've been doing and thank you for all the great things you've been doing.

VIRTUAL MEETINGS

As a result of the Coronavirus pandemic, groups and businesses have been forced to work and continue their activities from home. We understand this is a completely new way of interacting for some people and that many people experience IT issues.

One of the ways that community led housing groups can continue to run is through having online meetings. These can seem daunting to begin with but are a really effective way of holding regular meetings with your steering group, board and with the community.

There are a number of online meeting platforms available and there can be challenges to holding meetings in this way. So, to make it easier for you, we've put together some hints and tips about how to hold a successful online meeting and some links to information about some of the platforms available for you to use.

Some of the top tips include:

- ★ Make sure that you have a clear agenda before the meeting;
- ★ Keep the meetings short and concise, noting the minutes and actions like you would for a face to face meeting;

★ Mute your microphone when you aren't speaking so that others can't hear your background noise – this makes the sound much clearer for everyone in the meeting;

★ Share guidance on how to join the meeting and support those who may not have participated in an online meeting before.

★ For more information, hints and tips, our factsheet, 'Virtual meetings' is available to download from our website [here](#).



www.homesofourown.co.uk

If you or your community led housing group would like help with arranging and hosting online meetings, please get in touch with the Homes of Our Own team who would be more than happy to help you.

ADVICE FROM OUR COMMUNITY LAND TRUST ADVISOR

Governance may be boring, but it is important. Good governance is essential.

Community Land Trusts are in the community and of the community. Emerging and embryonic groups need to be open and transparent from the outset. Credibility in the community has to be gained and maintained.

A positive relationship with the town or parish council is critical.

Open meetings in public places with published agendas and minutes show it is open to all.

Regular meetings maintain momentum and develop trust and confidence amongst those meeting and observers.

Bringing in representatives of other local organisations to the steering group and/or Board cements the community - local churches, the primary school, etc.

Regular reporting through local newsletters helps maintain the right relationship not only with Community Land Trust members, but also the community at large. The Homes of Our Own advisors have the knowledge and experience to support good governance.

Ian Crawley, CLT Technical Advisor



COMMUNITY LED HOUSING IN WILTSHIRE

As may be expected in the current circumstances, community led housing group activity over the past 6 weeks has been varied.

A very big well done to groups that have continued to operate in the situation, and to those who have postponed upcoming meetings and events the Homes of Our Own team will still be here to support you when you're ready to start thinking about your projects again.

Despite the pandemic, there have still been some key activities that Homes of Our Own wanted to highlight and celebrate. They include:

[Seend Community Land and Asset Trust](#) have recently

submitted their planning application for 11 homes. They have continued to work hard at gathering support for the application. More information on this can be found on page 6.

In February 2020 **Pewsey Community Land Trust** held their AGM. During this they distributed membership cards to their members, launched a call for sites and engaging conversations with member regarding site took place.

On 31 March 2020 [Cricklade Development Foundation](#) held an online AGM which saw the re-appointment of the Directors. They are continuing to work on a High Street Strategy, which is likely to be more important now than ever.

[Colerne Community Land and Asset Trust](#) were due to host a launch event in March 2020 but unfortunately, this had to be postponed. They instead uploaded important and interesting information to their website, which has attracted a number of new members.

The steering group are continuing to meet via online meetings and are continuing to develop the organisation with support from Homes of Our Own.

[Worton Parish Council](#) were due to hold a Community Led Housing event in April 2020, unfortunately this event had to be cancelled but it is likely to be re-arranged in the future. We'll keep you updated.

HOMES OF OUR OWN WEBSITE NOW LIVE

The Homes of Our Own team have been working hard over the past few months to create and finalise the Homes of Our Own website and are really proud to announce that the new website is now live!



The website contains lots of practical information about Homes of Our Own and the support we can offer to Community Led Housing groups in the Wiltshire and Swindon area.

You can also download copies of our newsletter, find out what we've been up to in the 'news' section and access lots of useful community-led housing resources.



Find out more by visiting the website at www.homesofourown.co.uk.

SPOTLIGHT ON SEEND

[Seend Community Land and Asset Trust](#) have submitted their Park Farm planning application for a development of one four-bed self-build house and 10 affordable houses.

They are working in partnership with White Horse Housing and Homes of Our Own to enable affordable housing for the long-term benefit of the community.

The development has been designed to achieve the [Passivhaus](#) standard which strives to significantly improve a building's energy performance and far exceeds current building regulation requirements.

White Horse Housing specialise in building and managing homes in villages throughout Wiltshire, Swindon and surrounding areas. Belinda Eastland from White Horse Housing said, "We are proud to be the development

partner to Seend Community Land and Asset Trust.

We have a strong track record of working closely with village communities throughout Wiltshire not only to give local people in housing need access to a quality home they can afford but also to help sustain the wider community in which they are located. You can read more about our work [here](#)."

Lynn Gibson, CEO of Community First, a key partner for the hub says, "New housing developments planned by and built for the community are really a fantastic way to proceed. Seend really are a trailblazer for the county and have done a fantastic job. We are so pleased they have now got to this stage in the process and are an exemplary example for other schemes in the future. See our newly launched [website](#) about types of Community Housing and the services we offer."

George Clarke from [Seend Community Land and Asset Trust](#) said "We've worked really hard with the community to take account of the positive feedback we have had and after more than two years of work are excited to have reached this stage. In the difficult months that lie ahead for the economy the availability of good quality affordable homes in our Parish is likely to prove a lifechanging opportunity for somebody or indeed several people here."

All three partners, together with the scheme architects, PKA Architects Ltd, have attended the four public consultation meetings for the scheme, prior to its submission.

We are delighted to share this exciting news about the [planning application](#) and look forward to the next stage.

SIGN UP FOR NEWS

We've made it easy for you to receive relevant news and information about Homes of Our Own. We will let you know about latest projects, events, training, community grants and funding information and much more through our newsletters.

You can either click on the link to the right or visit www.homesofourown.co.uk to subscribe.

We have lots of things coming up, so let's keep in touch!

[Sign up for news here](#)



HOMES OF OUR OWN

Homes of Our Own is a Community Led Housing Hub for Wiltshire and Swindon.

We offer specialist advice and support to engage communities in providing housing for the future.

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SOCIAL MEDIA

We're on Social Media and regularly share news and information.

If you like what we have to say, we'd love you to follow/like/share.



@homesofourown